

CLAIMS

1. A method of transmitting a recording comprising:

- commencing transmission thereof;
- holding received data in a receiver buffer; and

5 - commencing playing of said received data;

characterised by the steps of analysing the whole of the recording to determine a point at which to commence playing such that no buffer underflow can occur; and commencing playing only when this point has been reached.

10 2. A method of transmitting a recording comprising:

- commencing transmission thereof;
- holding received data in a receiver buffer; and
- commencing playing of said received data;

characterised by the steps of:

15 analysing the whole of the recording to identify a first section at the beginning thereof which meets the condition that it covers a playing time interval greater than or equal to the maximum of the timing error for a following section of any length, each timing error being defined as the extent to which the transmission time of the respective following section exceeds its playing time interval; and causing the receiver to commence playing
20 only after said first section has been received.

3. A method according to claim 2 comprising, after transmission of said first portion, transmitting an instruction to the receiver to commence playing.

25 4. A method according to claim 2 comprising transmitting to the receiver an instruction specifying the first section and wherein the receiver commences playing when it recognises that the first section is in the buffer.

5. A method according to claim 2 in which the analysis comprises:

30 (a) at the transmitter, computing said maximum timing error values for different portions of the sequence, and

(b) at the receiver, comparing the values with the buffer contents to recognise when said first section is in the buffer.

5 6. A method according to claim 2 comprising withholding transmission of an initial part of the recording until the remainder of said first section has been transmitted; transmitting said initial part; and wherein the receiver commences playing only when said initial part is received.

10 7. A method according to claim 2,3, 4 or 6 including performing the analysis in advance and marking the identified section in the recording.

15 8. A method according to any one of claims 2 to 6 where said analysis includes computing, in advance, timing error values corresponding to a plurality of transmitting data rates and storing them; and subsequently estimating therefrom an error value corresponding to an actual transmitting data rate.

20 9. A method according to any one of the preceding claims in which the analysis comprises testing a timing error parameter evaluated for successive portions of the recording, wherein the timing error parameter is firstly calculated in respect of a first or early portion of the recording and the timing error parameter for subsequent portions is obtained by updating the parameter obtained for the preceding portion.

25 10. A method according to any one of the preceding claims in which the recording is a video recording.

11. A method according to any one of the preceding claims in which the recording is an audio recording.